
**BRIEF OF ARGUMENT TO BE
PRESENTED BY THE WOMEN SUFFRAGE
ASSOCIATION OF THE STATE OF PENN-
SYLVANIA, TO THE COMMISSION TO
REVISE THE ELECTIVE LAWS OF THE
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA, AT
A PUBLIC HEARING, ON MARCH 22, 1912**

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GENTLEMEN :

Your honorable body have requested us to direct our atten-
tion principally to the following questions :

1. DO THE MAJORITY OF WOMEN DESIRE THE RIGHT OF
SUFFRAGE, AND WHAT STATISTICS ARE AVAILABLE AS A BASIS OF
JUDGMENT ON THIS QUESTION ?

2. WILL THE RIGHT OF SUFFRAGE, IF GRANTED, BE EXER-
CISED GENERALLY BY WOMEN, AND WHAT STATISTICS ARE AVAIL-
ABLE ON THIS POINT ?

3. WILL THE EXERCISE OF SUFFRAGE BY WOMEN RESULT IN
A BENEFIT TO THE COMMUNITY, AND WHAT STATISTICS ARE
AVAILABLE ON THIS QUESTION ?

It is the intention of the Women Suffrage Society of the
State of Pennsylvania to introduce before the Commission a
number of speakers, who will each represent a large body of
the citizens of the State. Each of these speakers will select
some specific points within the broader subject you have out-
lined in these questions.

The following answers to the principal questions pro-
pounded by your honorable body have been prepared :

1. DO THE MAJORITY OF WOMEN DESIRE THE RIGHT OF
SUFFRAGE, AND WHAT STATISTICS ARE AVAILABLE AS A BASIS OF
JUDGMENT ON THE QUESTION ?

That the majority of women do desire the right of suffrage,
we contend, and propose to prove, so far as a question which

involves an exercise of the franchise to vote can be answered by a class of persons who have not that franchise.

That the great majority of women do desire the right of suffrage is shown by the effect of that desire upon all the countries of the civilized world. Women already vote on equal terms with men in Norway and Finland, sending representatives to their legislatures, who have, in the short time which has elapsed since their enfranchisement, made a most honorable record for themselves, and done most valuable work for their country and for the special interests of women. Australia and New Zealand have also wholly enfranchised their women citizens, and in those States women vote on equal terms with men. These progressive and enlightened States have accorded the vote to women at the request and desire of the women of those countries. They did not require proof of a numerical majority in favor of the grant of the right to vote, but convinced by the logic of their own democratic constitutions and the desires of the intelligent and progressive women of their countries, they placed the women citizens on that plane of full citizenship which they had become convinced was rightfully theirs.

In England, Scotland, Ireland, Denmark and Sweden women vote in municipal elections. Can it be argued that they do this in opposition to the wishes of the women themselves? If the argument should be made, an examination of the circumstances of their enfranchisement will show that women have been asking for these privileges for many years before they have been granted, and that the grant has only been in deference to those earnestly and ardently expressed demands.

In the United States there are six of the important and growing Commonwealths of the West already fully committed to woman suffrage. We would ask your honorable body to read the history of the struggle for full citizenship by the women of those States, if there is in your minds any doubt in regard to the desire of the women for suffrage. It is a history which cannot but be full of interest to any American citizen.

It repeats in its details the history of the struggle for freedom of any portion of the human race. It is full of self-sacrifice, self-devotion, self-immolation even, for the sake of the cause of freedom.¹ Women have given of their time, their labor, their money, and last, but far from least, they have gone out among the careless, the indifferent and the scornful, and while standing for all that is highest and best in the world, have endured obloquy, detraction and misrepresentation. If they have not had to suffer a physical martyrdom, they have known to the full that severer form which tortures the mind, the heart and the soul. These six States send us to-day the heartiest indorsement of the cause. They have turned their organizations which fought for suffrage for themselves into organizations to secure that right for their less favored sisters of the non-suffrage States. The women of six great States desired suffrage for themselves, and they now desire it for the States that have not yet won it. Does it seem that women desire the right to vote?

In the great Commonwealth of Pennsylvania the women citizens are not less progressive than the citizens of any other State. They have organized into associations which have for their object the enfranchisement of the women of this State. The women suffrage associations, organized in county, state and national societies form a compact body who work for the reform and who represent uncounted thousands who uphold the cause, but for various reasons are not members of these associations. There are other associations of women organized for the purpose of securing the vote. Some of them are affiliated with the state body and are organized solely for the purpose of gaining the vote, as the College Equal Suffrage Leagues and the Equal Franchise Societies. Many of them are not organized for the purpose of securing equal suffrage, but have indorsed the movement with enthusiasm. These associations represent many thousands of organized women who will present their cause to you. But there are many who are not so organized and who represent many thousands more. Among these are the professional women who are almost

solidly in favor of the extension of the suffrage to women. Our business women also find that the ballot is a necessity to them in their business life, and our home-makers (exclusive of those women whose great wealth has kept them in ignorance of the life led by the average American women, or those women whose oppressive poverty has held them in ignorance of any movement which could better their condition) have found that the only way to protect the home after it is made is to have a voice in the direction of the affairs of the state, city or town in which the homes have their place. All these various classes of women have learned that the ballot is not merely a thing of theory, a mere bit of paper, with which they, as women in the home, have nothing to do, but that it is a practical necessity if they would protect their lives, their property and their sacred honor. Their lives and the lives of their children, for the evils of impure air, adulterated food, tainted water, dirty streets, insufficient or imperfect drainage, and improper housing all demand a toll of life after life from the homes of the State which are unprotected by the mother mind and the mother heart, that mind and heart which would hold the lives of the children more sacred than any other thing on earth; their property, for they have learned that under the guise of taxation that property is taken without their consent and used for things of which they do not approve, while the things for which they have the greatest desire are left to be done by the zeal and the generosity of the individual citizen—that citizen being in very many cases a woman—to accomplish; their sacred honor, for in a republic such as this of ours, where every man is considered worthy to be self-governing, no matter how ignorant, no matter how debased, no matter how far beneath the average American woman in all that goes to the making of citizenship, has a status as a citizen that no woman of this State, no matter how intelligent, no matter how moral, no matter how high in the scale of civilization she may be, can attain. Thus is the position of women in the State of Pennsylvania one that reflects upon their honor, their intelligence and their virtue.

Pennsylvania boasts that it is one of the greatest and most progressive Commonwealths of the country; she deplores the tendency of the times to place her among the less progressive and the less enlightened States. But in addition to the full suffrage and the municipal suffrage granted to women by the States already mentioned, we have in our own country twenty-four States in which a limited form of women suffrage exists; from those of the East and South, like New Hampshire, Delaware and Louisiana to those of the Middle West, like Ohio and Illinois and the far west, like Arizona, Montana and Oregon, all portions of the country are represented, and yet Pennsylvania has taken not one step toward the recognition of her women citizens. Pennsylvania is not only behind her sister States, like New York and New Jersey, in this question, but she is behind Canada, where widows and single women have the municipal franchise; she is not only behind New Zealand and Australia, Tasmania and the Isle of Man, but she is also behind Bosnia, where women having a certain amount of real estate have the Parliamentary franchise, and she is also behind India, where in the Province of Baroda the women vote in municipal elections. The women of Pennsylvania may not care so greatly to be held inferior in civil status to the women of other States of our own country; they may bear such a relation to the women of the English Commonwealths with patience; but to be placed by the men of their own State on a lower level than are the women of India and Asia by the men of those countries, is displeasing to their self-respect. It is injurious to their sense of the dignity and honor of the great Commonwealth in which they live to feel that she is being left behind in the social progress of the age: they desire that the State they most wish to honor should be the first of the great eastern Commonwealths to grant full citizenship to women. They desire that the State of Pennsylvania may, in the history which shall be written in the future, gain the great distinction of being the leader among the great States in this beneficent reform, and in thus granting freedom to its women citizens gain for itself an enduring honor.

To show that the women of this Commonwealth desire the right to vote, we shall present to you persons from all the leading classes of the community. We shall present to you leaders of various organized bodies, who will either represent those bodies in their entirety, or who will speak as individuals who are the mouthpiece of many thousands who desire the elective franchise for women.

Among those who will thus speak for us are the representatives of:

The Women's Christian temperance associations of the State of Pennsylvania.

The labor unions of the State of Pennsylvania.

The professional women of the State of Pennsylvania.

The women of the granges of the State of Pennsylvania.

The educators of the State of Pennsylvania, men and women.

The women who will speak for the home-makers of the State of Pennsylvania.

These will speak for the great body of women who are unorganized and unnumbered, yet who form a great mass who are desirous of being represented by persons chosen by themselves to protect the home.

The business women of the community.

Representative men, who, believing in the government under which they live, desire that it be made a democracy in fact, and not in theory only.

All these men and women desire the ballot for the women of the State of Pennsylvania. They represent every portion of the body politic, so far as the time allowed for such representation is sufficient. Were there more time we could produce hundreds of other citizens, equally responsible, equally intelligent, equally desirous of securing the happiness and the

prosperity of the great State in which they live. It would seem that there could be no question of the desirability and the justice of a cause so championed and supported.

The following exhibits are herewith appended, setting forth the facts, and giving full data in support of the propositions set forth above:

A. "History of Woman Suffrage."

B. Statement of Hon. John F. Shafroth, Governor of Colorado, before the Committee on Woman Suffrage in the United States Senate, on Joint Resolution, 81: "Should Women Have Equal Suffrage?"

C. A pamphlet entitled "Why Legislators Should Submit the Woman Suffrage Amendment to the Voters."

D. A pamphlet entitled "The Revolution in Women's Work Makes Votes for Women a Necessity."

The women of the State who will be presented to you will ask you in reporting this bill from the Commission, to take into consideration that they, as well as the men of the community, are a part of the people of the Commonwealth. We find that you are very glad to enumerate them when you take the census; you are anxious to tax them when you are counting up the assessable property of the people of the State; the provisions in your criminal code assume as deep a responsibility upon their part, as grave a burden of obligation as is enjoined upon the adult man. The burdens of the law are laid upon women as upon responsible, mentally mature and morally developed persons. In asking for their recognition as persons in the matter of the elective franchise we are but asking for the logical outcome of all other legislation in respect to women. It would appear reasonable that we be either recognized as mentally immature, morally irresponsible and practically incompetent by those laws which impose burdens, or that we be recognized as fully responsible adults by those laws which grant a status and a privilege; we must either be like children,

incapable of responsible action, or capable of all that a responsible citizen is empowered to do.

The necessity for the vote will be maintained by the working women and the professional women—if these can be differentiated—for they need the vote to obtain proper conditions under which they may do their work.

The professional woman needs the vote in order that she may meet the professional man without the handicap of a lower social status. She has now to overcome the assumption implied by her disfranchisement, that she is not a fully equipped human being, and the lack of confidence that her fellow human beings must feel as they recognize, consciously or unconsciously, that limitation. They need it as ministers of religion, for how can their congregations feel that a person not qualified—in the opinion of the State—for self-government, is yet capable of leading, informing, counselling them in all the most serious affairs of life. They need it as lawyers, for how shall clients feel that they can lean on a strong mind, a steady will, a powerful character, if to that counsel is denied the ordinary right of self-government, that right which is granted to every street sweeper and bartender.

The women doctors need it, for how shall the patient believe that the clear brain, the strong common sense, the trained intellect, which is needed in the care of the sick and the suffering, can be offered by a person incompetent, by verdict of the law, of self-government.

The vote is needed by the school teacher, for how shall she train the future citizens for their civic duties if she has not character, not brain, not ordinary practical sense enough to govern herself.

The need of the unprofessional woman worker is more pressing still. It is a comparatively new world in which she finds herself, fitted to the needs of men through their earlier occupancy and use of it; she finds conditions unsuited to her, hardships pressing upon her, evils unknown to men surround-

ing her, often when she is too young to know more than that they do oppress her. She is there not because she wishes to be there; for love of the work, or even for love of freedom and the things that money can buy. She is there as the young birds are thrust to the edge of the nest, because that nest is too small, because the parents can no longer feed and care for them; they are thrust out upon the world to do the best they can while very young and very weak. Is it right and is it fair that to all those hardships should be added that of a lower status and an utter powerlessness in changing those conditions? The very young girl will not have the vote, it is true, as has been said, when she is first forced into the field of labor, but in a few years of working under present conditions she learns by bitter experience more of what her need is than she could gain from any college of learned theorists. When she is old enough for the vote she has learned self-control, gained self-knowledge and what is needed to better her standing in the world. She needs the vote, and she is learning every day how she can use it to better her conditions and the conditions of the laboring world in general. This is the reason—outside the claims of abstract justice—which have led the organized workers of the world to favor our cause; experience has taught them that the disfranchisement of women is an evil for the man as well as for the woman.

Greater in numbers than all the others combined, not organized as are the women outside the home, and given no status in any field, tabulated by our latest census as persons of no occupation, the great mass of the home-makers and mothers of the State have come in these last few years to feel even more deeply than any other body of women the bitter need of the vote for the better protection of the home and the child. Trained in self-sacrifice and self-devotion it is always difficult to bring them to ask for anything for themselves. But when they find that conditions surround them which menace the home and threaten evil to the child they are more insistent than any other class, for women have always answered more

earnestly, ardently, and enthusiastically to the call of the weak and of the helpless than to any appeal to their self-love.

For all these reasons women and men will present to you their urgent need for this thing for which they are pleading. Many of the women who now ask for it are no longer young; they will not long benefit by the grant if it is given, but they, in many cases, are mothers who have seen in their own lives the necessity of this right for their daughters who are to come after them; and not only for their daughters, but for their sons, for the mother of a son and a daughter would not ask that for one which should work evil for the other. No! The mothers of this Commonwealth would ask for this right to be given to the daughter whom they love as to the son whom they love, and she, if any one, can be trusted to be unbiassed in her desire for good for one in equal measure with good for the other. And if she, believing that this right granted to the daughter, giving her the status and the standing her mother has found the need of, feels yet more strongly that that blessing, as she believes it will become to her daughter, will be as great a blessing, as distinct an advantage, as long a step in advance for that son as for that daughter, shall any other man or woman be heard to deny it?

2. WILL THE RIGHT OF SUFFRAGE, IF GRANTED, BE EXERCISED GENERALLY BY WOMEN, AND WHAT STATISTICS ARE AVAILABLE ON THIS POINT?

There are already six States within the Union where full suffrage is granted to women. The statistics in regard to the numbers of women voting in these States follow. These statistics prove that not only do women exercise the right of suffrage wherever it is granted, but that they exercise it more generally than the men voters. These statistics show that they have shown everywhere and under all circumstances an enlightened public intelligence, that they have informed themselves upon the questions upon which they were to vote, and that whenever the question was one of great importance to the home, the child, the public health, or education, they have not only turned

out a surprisingly large percentage of their total registration, but they have worked early and late to get out the reluctant or inactive male voter. The statistics of the countries which have made woman equal under their laws with the male citizen show the same results as those of our own States. Equally ardent and interested as a voter when the question is one which involves States and countries and large administrative matters, she is far more interested than the male voter in the questions which particularly involve the home and the child. It is not a question whether the woman voter will be as interested in the questions under consideration as the male voter, but, in view of the statistics as we have them, if she will not be a far more interested voter and poll a far greater percentage of the vote than has the male voter. Our last State, California, already indicates that this latter result has already come to pass in one of our greatest and most important States.

The statistics referred to follow.

Colorado.

To show the result it is necessary to take as a basis of comparison other States nearly equal in population to the equal suffrage State. We take Maine and Washington (figuring as a non-suffrage State, as there has been no presidential election since the women of Washington were granted equal suffrage) and compare it with Colorado.

VOTE FOR PRESIDENT.

Maine: Population (1900), 694,466. 1896, 118,593; 1900, 105,720; 1904, 96,027; 1908, 106,335.

Washington: Population (1900), 1,075,524. 1896, 93,583; 1900, 107,524; 1904, 128,713; 1908, 183,879.

Colorado: Population (1900), 539,700. 1896, 189,687; 1900, 221,336; 1904, 246,693; 1908, 263,877.

The vote in this list is not separated. The vote for Denver is separated, and the result shows that there were

registered in the city of Denver, in 1908, 41,530 men, of whom 36,891 voted, and 35,620 women, of whom 29,085 voted.

These statistics show that in the suffrage State of Colorado about twice as many votes are cast as in States of equal population where man suffrage exists. For the State of Colorado and the statistics in regard to the number of women registering and voting there, and also as to the general effect of that vote we would call the attention of your committee to the pamphlet by Governor John H. Shafroth, of Colorado, on the topic "Should Women Have Equal Suffrage?" which is appended to this brief and marked "Exhibit B."

Idaho.

In 1895 a suffrage amendment to the state constitution was proposed, and by a vote of 33 in the House, and a unanimous vote in the Senate, it was decided to submit the amendment to the people. In 1906 the amendment was carried by a majority of 5844.

Number of women now eligible to vote, 68,000.

The State is not thickly settled, but despite this fact, the figures for the sixteen since the women were enfranchised show that from 75 per cent. to 85 per cent. of the women eligible to vote do so.

Wyoming.

This State has had woman suffrage ever since its organization. To give figures as to the registration since 1869 would not be practical here, but the number of women eligible to vote is 34,000, and the percentage of the vote, as compiled from the figures shows that from 80 to 90 per cent. of the women vote.

Utah.

In 1896, when statehood was conferred on Utah, woman suffrage was included in the constitution. The number of women eligible to vote is 55,000. The percentage of women who vote, according to the commissioner of the State Bureau of Statistics, is from 85 to 90 per cent., which is a higher percentage than the male vote can show.

Washington.

The women of Washington were enfranchised in 1910. Immediately afterward they registered in very great numbers, 85 to 95 per cent. of the women eligible are shown to have voted in the local elections which have since been held.

California.

Full suffrage was granted to California only in 1911. The enthusiasm for the vote was so great that in the city and local elections since held, the percentage of the vote cast is given as over 90 per cent.

See also the pamphlet entitled "Objections Answered," by Alice Stone Blackwell, marked "Exhibit E."

3. WILL THE EXERCISE OF THE SUFFRAGE BY WOMEN RESULT IN A BENEFIT TO THE COMMUNITY, AND WHAT STATISTICS ARE AVAILABLE ON THIS QUESTION?

Those communities where the suffrage has been granted present the most pointed answer to a question of that sort. The statistics showing the beneficent changes in the laws of those States and countries, showing the greater economic in-

dependence and equality of women, showing the greater respect and power which come to women with the change in her political status all prove of what benefit the grant of the suffrage has been. The rise of any portion of the community from a lower to a higher status is always attended by a corresponding benefit to that community. How much more so when the rise is of one-half of the adult population from a dependent to an independent status? The testimony of the governors of the enfranchised States, which is solidly and enthusiastically in favor of the vote for women, should alone be sufficient to settle the question for all time. The fact that the citizens from the enfranchised States who come to the East are all earnestly in favor of the vote for women should be accepted as the testimony of those who have experienced the benefits for which we ask.

There have been persons who have asserted that the vote for women has not benefited the communities of the West. We have been most fortunate in having a vague and unformed prejudice against us rather than any well-formulated and well-organized opposition. Arguments against the granting of the right of suffrage so uniformly involve arguments against the intelligence, the morality, the public spirit and the practical common sense of women themselves that it is difficult for the societies opposed to woman suffrage, which have been organized in some few of the States of the Union, to arouse any enthusiasm among the women, and it is difficult for men who claim the right of suffrage for all men to state any argument against the right of women to the same privilege, without stultifying their own position or being driven to make statements in regard to the women of their communities which they feel to be unjustifiable. We have, therefore, but this one small society organized against us, and the unorganized oppo-

sition is so fluctuating and seems so dependent upon local conditions and causes that we may claim, from the experience of the elections already held where the question has come up, that we have no permanent enemies, and that where the question is not confused with other issues, and the vote is fairly upon the question of the vote for women, we have either the majority of the vote for us, or an overwhelmingly large proportion of the intelligent vote. We have learned, as Alice Stone Blackwell has said, that "the ignorant, the criminal, and the vicious vote is always cast solidly against equal rights for women," but we know that that vote is as sure to be against the interest of all intelligent and patriotic men; we cannot call such voters our enemies especially, for they are the enemies of all. It has been our recent experience that our cause has won friends in every branch of society, and among all classes of men and women. We feel that we have but one real enemy—ignorance of our position and the reasons by which we have been led to take that position. We believe that we have but to conquer that ignorance, which still obtains in the less progressive portions of the country, and our work is done.

The statistics show that the following laws have been passed in the States where woman suffrage has been a fact long enough for the women to have had any effect upon legislation.

Colorado has passed an act making the wife the joint guardian with the husband.

Rev. Stats. of Colorado, 1908, p. 795, Sec. 2912.

Colorado has passed an act providing that where husband is in jail for non-support the county shall contribute toward support of wife.

Rev. Stats. of Colorado, 1908, p. 940, Sec. 3539.

Colorado has passed an act providing that in a mortgage of the homestead both husband and wife must join.

Rev. Stats. of Colorado, 1908, p. 804, Sec. 2955.

Colorado has passed an act providing that employers must provide seats for female employes.

Rev. Stats. of Colorado, 1908, p. 1003, Sec. 3929.

And in the last year Colorado has passed what has been called "the most progressive, most scientific and reasonable child labor law ever passed anywhere.

Rev. Laws of Colorado, 1911, p. 232.

An eight-hour day for women has been provided for by the laws of Colorado.

Rev. Laws of Colorado, 1908, p. 1001.

An eight-hour labor day for workers in the mines, showing that the result is equally as good for men as for women.

Rev. Stats. of Colorado, 1908, p. 1001.

A law making mining property subject to lien.

Rev. Laws of Colorado, 1911, p. 493.

A miners' commission law, providing for investigation of accidents, etc.

Session Laws of Colorado, 1911.

An employers' liability law.

Session Laws of Colorado, 1911, p. 294.

Idaho

In Idaho husband and wife are treated as partners and the laws regarding their mutual property are based on that idea. Equality before the law and a mutual independence and dependence. To cite the laws confirming that status and that attitude of the legislation of the State would be to cover all parts of the Idaho Revised Codes, but to show the sort of legislation which is enacted in a suffrage State we cite certain laws passed at the last session of the legislature:

An act providing for the commission form of government for cities.

Idaho Session Laws, p. 314.

A series of bills prepared under the direction of the state board of health to prevent the sale of impure food and drugs, to provide for sanitary conditions in all places where food products are prepared or supplied to the public, and to care for the public health in other particulars.

Idaho Session Laws, 1911.

Improved school laws, including provisions for a state board of education to be composed of expert educators.

Idaho Session Laws, 1911, p. 487, etc.

An improved primary law.

Idaho Session Laws, 1911, p. 571.

A pure seed law and others intended to benefit farmers.

Idaho Session Laws, 1911, p. 425 and v. p.

An anti-trust law said to combine many of the best features of other state laws aimed at such combinations.

Idaho Session Laws, 1911, p. 688.

Utah.

The constitution of Utah provides that "Both male and female citizens of this State shall enjoy equally all civil, political and religious rights and privileges."

Constitution of Utah, 1895, Art. IV, Sec. 1.

Under this constitution the laws of Utah have been enlightened and progressive.

The State has authorized a board of labor.

Laws of 1901, p. 68.

An eight-hour law for public employes, and in mines and smelters.

Laws of 1901, p. 37.

Laws of 1903, p. 85.

The employment of females and children in mines and smelters has been forbidden.

Con., Art. XVI, Sec. 3.

Seats for female help must be provided by the proprietor, manager or person having charge of any store, shop, hotel, restaurant, or other place where women and girls are employed as clerks or help.

Compiled Laws of Utah, 1907, chap. 3, Sec. 1339.

Women employed in the public schools of the State must receive the same compensation as male teachers for like services, when holding the same grade certificates.

Compiled Laws of Utah, 1907, p. 705, Sec. 1853.

In 1911, among other laws, the following were passed:

An act to prevent the "white slave traffic."

Utah Session Laws, 1911, p. 339.

An act prohibiting the employment of any child under fourteen years of age in any occupation dangerous to physical or moral welfare.

Utah Session Laws, 1911, p. 289.

An act extending the provisions of the nine-hour law to women, prohibiting their employment for more than nine hours a day or fifty-four hours a week.

Utah Session Laws, 1911, p. 265.

An act providing for the medical examination of school children.

An act forbidding the sale of cigarettes to minors.

Utah Session Laws, 1911, p. 285.

Utah Session Laws, 1911, pp. 68, 69.

And many more which cannot be noticed here; we but give these laws as an example of the legislation passed by a suffrage State.

Washington.

In the very short time since Washington became a "suffrage State," a number of laws have been passed especially favorable to women. In the session of the legislature for 1911 the following laws were passed:

An act providing that every employer must provide seats for his women employes.

Session Laws of Washington, 1911, p. 133.
An act limiting the hours of employment of women.

Session Laws of Washington, 1911, p. 131.
An employers' liability bill (with particular reference to
"contributory negligence").

Session Laws of Washington, 1911, p. 345.
An act providing for the commission form of government.

Session Laws of Washington, 1911, p. 521.
An act making the sale of tobacco to minors a gross misdemeanor.

Wyoming.

Wyoming is and always has been a suffrage State. When it was proposed to the people of Wyoming that they should come in without the suffrage clause in their constitution, as it was doubtful if they could secure statehood at that time with the right of women to vote included in that constitution, they refused to take the suggestion; the men refused to accept statehood if the women were to be disfranchised, and they were accepted with full freedom for all their adult citizens. The constitution of Wyoming says:

"Since equality in the enjoyment of natural and civil rights is made sure only through political equality, the laws of this State affecting the political rights and privileges of its citizens shall be without distinction of race, color, sex, or any circumstance or condition whatsoever other than individual incompetency, or unworthiness duly ascertained by a court of competent jurisdiction."

The laws of Wyoming regulating child labor, protecting their life and health, prohibiting the sale of tobacco, cigarettes or liquor to them, forbidding their employment in mines, in regard to child and animal protection are all of an enlightened and progressive type.

See the Wyoming Compiled Statutes, 1910, under these heads.

The provisions in regard to labor conditions for women, the raising of the age of consent to eighteen years, the powers of women before the law, the general status of women before the law can only be shown by a review of the laws of Wyoming and the conditions of life in Wyoming to be wholly favorable to women and the exercise of the elective franchise by her. The Compiled Statutes of Wyoming are the product of a State where women have a share in making the laws. The people of Wyoming believe their State to be pre-eminently well governed, and that their laws are exceptionally well suited to their needs. We therefore refer you to those statutes as a whole, asking you to take the testimony of the people of that State as to the effect of the enfranchisement of women upon them.

California.

California has had no session of the legislature since she became an enfranchised State. We can, therefore, cite no laws, and point to no provisions of the legislature which have been directly the work of women or directly approved by them. The indirect influence of women on the work of all the legislatures we have reason to believe has been great. Women have spent much time and labor in securing legislation beneficial to women and children—time and labor which they hope to greatly reduce by the more direct medium of the ballot. They also feel that an indirect influence may become harmful, while a responsible vote conscientiously cast cannot but be a safeguard to any State.

See also a pamphlet on the "Woman's Ballot," by M. Carey Thomas, president of Bryn Mawr College, marked "Exhibit F."

See also a pamphlet on "Woman Suffrage, its Relation to Working Women and Children," by Florence Kelly, marked

“Exhibit G,” and we would refer again to “Exhibits B and E” in this connection.

DISCUSSION OF QUESTIONS AS FORMULATED.

The answers to your questions have been formulated within the lines marked out by your committee, and we have here presented the statistics asked for. But having done this, it is necessary, in justice to the cause we uphold, to protest against the questions. If we do not, the brief stands as recognizing the questions as those upon which we are willing to base the justice and fairness of our cause. To so recognize them would be to stultify ourselves and injure our cause. Therefore we strongly protest—first, against the inference of the first question, that the majority of women should desire the ballot before those women who do desire it, even if in the minority, should have it. By what logic, by what reason, by what right are we asked to demonstrate a fact necessarily indeterminable under present conditions, and absolutely unnecessary if determinable? The grant of the franchise has been based hitherto on certain inalienable rights of the citizen; why should it be based on other considerations because the citizen happens to be a woman? It has been based on that cornerstone of our government that the just powers of the governed rest on the consent of the governed; why should this cornerstone be rejected because it is a woman who desires self-government? The grant has been based on the necessity for a republic that it should have the aid and assistance of every citizen of the republic; why should you reject the aid of the citizen because she happens to be a woman? Why should the fundamental reasons for the grant of the franchise be set aside in favor of a futile numerical enumeration, merely because the persons asking for the franchise are the women of the State of Pennsylvania? Whatever our numbers may be, and we believe them to be as hereinbefore set forth, we wish to herein register our protest against the unreasonable assumption that the women of Pennsylvania who wish to vote should

be denied what the question itself designates as a right, because there might exist a number of women—even a large number—who reasonably or unreasonably did not wish to exercise the right when given? No such demand has ever been made of any class which has been asking for the franchise in any country. The grant has always been based on the inherent justice of the grant itself, and we see no reason why our case should not be based, as all others have been, on the inherent right and justice of the cause itself.

2. We have also to protest against the second question, if intended as an assumption that the grant of the right to vote should be based upon the numbers of women who would exercise that right. This has never been made the basis of a grant of the right to vote to the male citizens of this State or of other States. Men are not now disfranchised because in many communities a large percentage of the male electorate do not vote. Any proposition to limit the right to vote because of that reason is always ridiculed and laughed down. It is assumed that the right to vote alone, exclusive of its exercise, is a great privilege, and that every man when his interests are touched will vote eagerly; the assumption should be the same for women. Give them a limited franchise to vote on questions not broadly interesting and they may not vote in great numbers; give them a franchise based on as wide a foundation as that of the men of this country and there is no reason to assume that they will not exercise it at least as freely. The assumption of the question is that women have not all the interests, all the ambitions and desires which are usually conceded to all the human race. We wish to protest earnestly against such an assumption.

3. The third question appears to us to question the desirability of the form of government under which we live, or else it is an assumption that women are less intelligent, less moral, less public spirited than are men. It does not appear to us that your honorable body could have meant to question the desirability of our present form of government,

or intended the latter assumption. If our government rests upon the consent of the governed, it must either rest upon the consent of the women of the country or upon the consent of only half the governed; in the latter case our government is based only in theory, and not in fact, upon its pretended basis, which must be a national dishonor, and in attempting to carry out its theory with only one-half its fact conforming to that theory, it is attempting an impossibility which must work evil to itself and to the inhabitants of the State, enfranchised and disfranchised. If our theory of government is sound the enfranchisement must necessarily be of benefit to the community; it cannot be otherwise.

As to the theory that women are less intelligent, less moral, less public spirited, less patriotic than men, we leave it to the men of the community, our fathers, our brothers, and our husbands to answer for us. The facts are before you. The statistics of the schools and colleges, the churches, the homes, the benevolent associations of every kind on the one hand, where the great body of the women of the State are found, and on the other hand the statistics of the jails and the police records, where so small a percentage of the women of the State figure; so small a percentage in the States where women vote that the criminal vote among women must be recognized as of no importance.

The gift of the franchise to vote to men has not been made on any basis of benefit to the community at large, but solely on the ground of the right of the individual to vote, the necessity of the individual for self-protection, and upon the equality of every citizen before the laws of the country. We earnestly urge you to place the question of the right of the women of the State to vote upon the same simple and dignified grounds upon which the right of men to the ballot is based. We ask no favors that have not been granted to those desiring the electoral privilege in the past, and we believe that we are justified in asking that we may be hampered by no greater restrictions or demands.

